

Welcoming Business

Our Business is for Everyone



How to attract more customers to your business by providing better access



THINK, SPEND, SUPPORT **LOCAL!**





“Good access is just as important to me as good food. My family always eats out at the same café because it serves good food and we can get in and out easily.”

Lisa, temporary disability

Did you know that older people and people with disabilities represent a considerable proportion of your potential customer base?

In Warrnambool, around 5,700 people have some form of disability. Furthermore, 38.1% of Warrnambool's population is over 50.

As potential customers, people will make choices about your business based on how easy it is to use. Improving access benefits people with disabilities, parents using prams or strollers, older people, delivery people or shoppers with heavy bags. In fact, good access benefits everybody-particularly when it's busy.

Good access makes good business sense!

The Welcoming Business Program can help your business improve access. It takes you through the minimum standards required to attain 'Welcoming Business' endorsement. Remember, improving access doesn't have to be expensive...just a few changes can go a long way to making your business more attractive to existing and potential customers.

This Welcoming Business Program updates the former green sticker program.

What is a Welcoming Business?

A Welcoming Business is a business that is committed to ensuring safe and easy access for everyone, including older people and people with disabilities and is endorsed by Warrnambool City Council's Welcoming Businesses Program.

To receive Welcoming Business endorsement, your business must satisfy a set of minimum standards relating to physical access, communication and customer service. Most of these standards are consistent with the Australian Standards for access and mobility.

The standards that must be adhered to are:

- Main entrance must be free of steps more than 5mm high
- Main entrance must be at least 800mm wide
- Aisles within the business must be at least 1000mm wide
- Where toilets are provided, one must be an accessible toilet
- Height of manual door handles must be between 900 – 1100mm
- Doors should be easy to open and not require excessive force
- Signage promoting accessible facilities within the business should be prominent
- "Communicating with Everyone" booklet must be distributed to staff
- Staff should be proactive in accommodating older people and people with a disability

What is a Welcoming Environment?

A Welcoming Environment is an organisation endorsed by the Welcoming Business



Program. To achieve a Welcoming Environment endorsement, the organisation has to satisfy the same set of minimum standards as a Welcoming Business.

Why become a Welcoming Business?

By becoming a Welcoming Business or Welcoming Environment, your business or organisation can achieve a range of benefits, including:

- Improving services to customers generally
- Reduce discrimination in a proactive way
- Reducing likelihood of complaints being made
- Responding to the needs of potential customers and attracting, as well as retaining, new customers
- Promotion of your business/organisation as a Welcoming Business or Welcoming Environment
- Welcoming Business logo will be promoted through various websites and publications

Want to find out more?

The Welcoming Business Program seeks to work in partnership with local organisations, businesses and the community around the issue of access for all people regardless of age and abilities. The program is a collaboration between the Economic Development team and the Community Services team of the Warrnambool City Council.

To find out more about the Welcoming Business Program please contact Warrnambool City Council on **5559 4800** or visit www.warrnambool.vic.gov.au/welcoming-business

What more can I do?

There is more you can do to make your business more accessible to customers, and there are a range of organisations to help you achieve this.

Useful Contacts

Media Access Australia

For information on captioning

Ph: (02) 9212 6242

Email: info@cfid.org.au

www.mediaaccess.org.au

Association of Consultants in Access, Australia

For information about disability awareness training and access audits

Ph: (03) 5221 2820

www.access.asn.au

Dementia Australia

For information on Dementia and available resources

Ph: 1300 100 500

www.dementia.com.au

Expression Australia

(formerly Victorian Deaf Society)

Ph: (03) 9473 1111

SMS/Facetime (video & sign)

0402 217 586

www.expression.com.au

Vision Australia

For assistance and advice to improve access to information, products, services and the built environment for people who are blind or vision impaired.

Ph: 1300 847 466

www.visionaustralia.org.au

Companion Card

For information about the Companion Card program

Ph: 1800 650 611

Email: companioncard@dhhs.vic.gov.au

www.companioncard.org.au

If changes to a business or organisation mean that it no longer meets the basic criteria of the program, the Welcoming Business Program reserves the right to withdraw that business or organisation from the program. The program will review all participating businesses and organisations every three years.